

EPA Supports Our Partners at FEMA and LDEQ Following Massive Flooding in Southern Louisiana.

Following several days of unprecedented rains, flooding in 20 southern Louisiana Parishes forced thousands of people out of their homes. A team from FEMA moved in to assist and EPA was part of that team.

In early and mid-August rainfall amounts up to 30 inches caused unprecedented flooding throughout 20 Parishes in southern Louisiana, including the greater Baton Rouge region. Tens of thousands of homes and businesses were inundated and thousands of residents were forced out of their homes. President Obama declared 20 parishes a major disaster, a declaration that made federal funding available to affected people in the Parishes of Acadia, Ascension, Avoyelles, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Evangeline, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Vermilion, Washington and West Feliciana.

In addition to FEMA's team of nearly 2,500 employees deployed to the disaster zone, EPA provided support by deploying a team of On-Scene Coordinators (OSC's) from the Region 6 office as well as support from a team back in the Regional Emergency Operations Center (Region 6 REOC). The EPA team provided support to FEMA by providing input on planning for debris management particularly as it related to hazardous materials management. EPA also provided support to our partners at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) and the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH) by assisting with the State's role in bringing drinking water systems and wastewater treatment systems back online. EPA also supported LDEQ by responding to flood-related oil and hazardous materials releases.

One example of EPA's support involved the response to a release of oil in a residential neighborhood in Denham Springs. The flooding event caused the release of approximately 1,000 gallons of oil from a oil-distribution facility that then impacted approximately 73 homes. Homes impacted had oil in yards, exterior portions of the home, and some with oil impacting the interior of the home. EPA worked directly with the oil distribution company to gain access to the properties, assess each home, , and conduct cleanup of impacted yards and homes.

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